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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 601
By Rhinehart

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of William Ealon Martin of
Van Buren County.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the death of William Ealon Martin; and

WHEREAS, William Ealon Martin was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for the young people of Van Buren County; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Martin was born to William and Pearl Martin on April 27, 1930 in Van Buren County; due to his parents' untimely deaths, he was raised by his sisters, Ms. Audrey Hodges and Ms. Mildred Deweese, in a manner that instilled in him the values of honesty, integrity, and hard work; and

WHEREAS, in 1948, Mr. Martin enlisted in the United States Air Force, and served his country with great honor, diligence, and pride until 1952; and

WHEREAS, William Ealon Martin and Edith McCoy were joined in holy matrimony on December 18, 1951, and returned to Van Buren County after he completed his honorable service in the military; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Martin, having the foresight to understand the importance of an education, enrolled in Tennessee Technological University, and earned his Bachelors of Science degree in Secondary Education in 1955; and

WHEREAS, his great desire to touch and improve the lives of young people led him to pursue a teaching career with the Van Buren County School System; and

WHEREAS, William Ealon Martin served the children of Van Buren County as a dedicated educator and head basketball coach at Van Buren County High School, and

WHEREAS, Mr. Martin coached both the boys and girls basketball teams four years, and then devoted himself exclusively to the boys basketball team throughout the duration of his tenure; and

WHEREAS, William Ealon Martin enjoyed tremendous success coaching at Van Buren County High School, winning over 500 games and earning recognition as the “Winningest Active Coach in Tennessee” during the 1980s; and

WHEREAS, despite his sterling success in athletics, Mr. Martin never lost sight of the need to touch the lives of young people through education; realizing his primary task was to empower his students through education, he believed that if you could inspire a child on the basketball court, you could do the same in the classroom; and

WHEREAS, William Ealon Martin retired from the Van Buren County School System after 28 years of impeccable service; he served the children of Van Buren County as an educator with acumen and alacrity, earning the respect of his peers, supervisors, and students and their parents alike, through his unbridled passion to teach; and

WHEREAS, William Ealon Martin was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, William Ealon Martin enjoyed the loving companionship his wife, Edith, with whom he celebrated 50 years of marriage on December 18, 2001; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Martin was the loving father of three children, Karen Denise Martin, who preceded him in death, Sandra Martin Rigsby, and Michael Martin; and the proud and

compassionate grandfather of four, Mark Rigsby, who preceded him in death, Lyn Alison Martin, Wesley Martin, and Matthew Rigsby; and

WHEREAS, William Ealon Martin leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we honor the memory of William Ealon Martin, reflecting fondly upon his exemplary character, his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction and his exemplary career as a teacher and mentor of young people.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of William Ealon Martin.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.